

TOWN OF WESTFORD
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Minutes for April 15, 2019 Meeting
Approved on June 17, 2019

Commission/Board Members Present: Koi Boynton, Wendy Doane, Gordon Gebauer, Seth Jensen and Mark Letorney.

Commission/Board Members Absent:

Also present: Melissa Manka (Planning Coordinator) and David Gauthier.

The meeting began at: 6:37 p.m.

Amendments to Agenda

No amendments offered.

Community Wastewater Solutions

The Planning Commission discussed community wastewater solutions for the Town Center Area.

S. Jensen described a funding scenario where 50% of the project is funded through a Northern Borders Grant, the town applies for a Clean Water State Revolving Loan with 50% loan forgiveness for an amount equal or less than the Town Office and Library's share of the total cost, the United Church applies for a federal historic sub-grant for an amount equal or more than their share of the total cost, and private investors/developers purchase capacity.

The Commission agreed to move forward in the following manner: 1) request a PER cost estimate from Green Mountain Engineering 2) contact Thomas Brown to discuss fulfilled PER requirements 3) set up a meeting with Mark Johnson of RCAP and review the wastewater guides provided by RCAP by the end of the summer. The Commission also discussed creating a visual illustration of the problem they are trying to solve (e.g. provide public and civic amenities and services, cease decay of grand list and structures within the village, encourage small business and economic development in the village, grow the grand list, preserve water quality, etc.). They suggested this could be displayed on a white board or they could request C. Hamdy's graphic design assistance.

Community Survey Results

The Planning Commission discussed the 2019 Community Survey Results. They agreed to discuss the results on a monthly basis as it pertains to the 2020 Town Plan chapter being worked on.

2020 Town Plan – Chapter 4

The Planning Commission reviewed and revised Chapter 4.

Citizens to be Heard, Announcements & Other Business

Town Center Property Updates

The Planning Commission discussed the status of Spiller and Pigeon properties. M. Letorney stated G. Pigeon is open to the CCRPC performing a phase 1 brownfield study. There were discussions surrounding asking K. Lalley to sketch some initial/informal conceptual plans for the property.

Vermont Council on Rural Development Update

M. Manka said she has been in contact with Jenna from VCRD. A focus group will meet sometime in May to develop the community visit topics and discuss logistics. K. Boynton offered to represent the Planning Commission at the meeting.

FIRM Update

M. Manka said FEMA will be updating our Flood Insurance Rate Maps to incorporate the recent LiDAR data collected by the State.

Westford Land Use & Development Regulation Digital Formatting

M. Manka explained the regulations are currently in Word format. However, Word was not made for the level of complexity, diagrams and illustrations within the document. She said this was the reason behind the difficulties experienced working with and formatting the last set of amendments. She spoke with several IT professionals who've stated the town will eventually need to move to book publishing software. She said breaking the document down into chapters will buy a little time. However, transition to a book publishing program seems inevitable.

S. Jensen suggested contacting CCRPC to ask whether that might be a resource/service they'd be willing to provide to towns as Adobe Illustrator is expensive and highly technical. He noted training staff to use such a program for infrequent use would be inefficient and ineffective.

Planning Commission Structure & Make Up

The Planning Commission agreed the town's CCRPC representative should be made an ex officio Planning Commissioner to ensure and encourage communication between entities. M. Manka will to research it further.

2019 Work Plan & Project Updates

The Planning Commission reviewed and revised their work plan.

Minutes of the March 25, 2019 Meeting

S. Jensen MOVED to approve the minutes.

M. Letorney SECONDED the motion.

The motion PASSED: 5 – 0.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:43 p.m.

Submitted by,
Melissa Manka, Westford Planning Coordinator